integration and economic growth in the region. Positive response has been received only from Sri Lanka in this regard. Currently, negotiations are taking place between India and Sri Lanka on the proposed bilateral Free Trade Agreement. The first round of discussions was held during November 16-17, 1998. The details of the terms of the Agreement are *still under negotiation.*

Strengthening trade relations with neighbouring countries will imporve India's market access in SAARC countries which is expected to increase economic activity, growth in output and improved employment opportunities for the common man.

Appointment of Outside Consultancy to Study India's Exports

1578. SHRI RAGHAVJI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to appoint an outside Consultancy to study India's exports and make recommendation for near, mid, long-term measures with special reference to WTO related issues; and

(b) whether Government propose to entrust the job to the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade which is their own organisation and is fully funded by them in case any outside consultancy is not appointed?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The IIFT is already closely involved with Ministry of Commerce in conducting various studies relating to export strategy and WTO issues. The IIFT has also been requested to set up a Centre for WTO Studies for focussed academic attention on WTO related issues.

Earnings from Trade Fair, 1998

1579. SHRI K.M. KHAN:Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what was the total earning from sale of entry tickets separately from adults, minors during India International Trade Fair, 1998 during Public and non-public h· ·rs;

(b) what utilisation is to be made from this earning by India Trade Promotion Organisatioin;

(c) what was the total earning made by each State Pavillion especially Andhra Pradesh with utilisation of the same by each State;

(d) what is the total earning made by Railways during I.I.T.F 1998 for carrying the passengers to the Fair;

(e) what was the total earning from parking lots constructed near connecting Railway station to I.I.T.F. 98; and

(f) what utilisation is to be made from the earnings as in parts (d) and (e)?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) The deails of total earning from sale of entry tickets of India International Trade Fair, 1998 (IITF' 98) are given below:

Amount (Rs. in lakhs)

	Adults	Children (5 to 12 years)	Total
During Public hours	136.08	7.66	143.74
During non-Public hours	16.79	—	16.79
Total	152.87	7.66	160.53

(b) The earning are treated as normal income from the activities of India Trade Promotion Organisatioin (ITPO) and are not earmarked for any specific activity.